

## **Herseth Sandlin Announces Deployment of 25 Law Enforcement Officers to Standing Rock Sioux Indian Reservation**

**April 7, 2010**-Today, Rep. Stephanie Herseth Sandlin announced that the U.S. Department of the Interior will transfer 25 federal law enforcement officers to the Standing Rock Sioux Indian Reservation by April 25th. This "High Priority Performance Goal" strategy is a follow-up to Operation Dakota Peacekeeper which added 56 law enforcement officers during a seven month surge last year. Those officers left Standing Rock after seven months, but these new 25 officers will gradually be replaced by newly trained permanent BIA officers over the course of two years.

"This deployment of these officers will significantly help address the law enforcement needs of the Standing Rock Sioux," said Rep. Herseth Sandlin. "Until recently, the Standing Rock Sioux experienced crime rates six times higher than the rest of Indian Country. These officers will go a long way to reducing crime, increasing prosecutions, and creating a basic sense of security and safety on the Standing Rock Sioux Indian Reservation."

Herseth Sandlin highlighted the importance of ensuring that this is a permanent, not temporary, increase in law enforcement presence in the area. She said, "Law enforcement is one of the federal government's trust obligations to federally-recognized tribes. Yet, as the tribes across the country know all too well, on many counts, we are failing to meet that obligation and have done so for too many years. This project is a good step towards reversing those failures."

Herseth Sandlin has long worked for improved law enforcement in Indian Country, and has introduced the Tribal Law and Order Act in the House to remove long-standing obstacles in meeting these critical security needs. She noted, "I am hopeful that congress will soon take action on the Tribal Law and Order Act which I have sponsored so we can provide more tools to Standing Rock and the rest of Indian Country in providing safety to Native families and children."

The 25 officers will be transferred to the Standing Rock Reservation from different agencies within the Department of the Interior including the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Bureau of Indian Affairs. No officers will be transferred from other South Dakota reservations to aid in this project. Prior to their deployment, the officers will receive cultural sensitivity training.